

A History of the Bureau of Land Management National Training Center



*In commemoration of the
25th Anniversary of the
first course offered by the
Bureau of Land Management
Lands and Minerals School*

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Graduates of the first class offered by the Lands and Mineral School. This 6-week class was held from January 27 to March 7, 1969.



Kneeling, from left to right, Bill Ireland, Willis Anderson, Don Woodman, Elved Williams. Standing, from left to right, Keith Miller, Jim Paschal, Tom Owen (Instructor), Kenneth Irons, Maurice Hurd (behind Irons), John Rumps, Minor Martin, Clarence Smith (behind Martin), Vince Hecker (Instructor), Jim Edlefsen (Instructor behind Hecker), Dick Harms, Tim Heisler (behind Harms), Will Kempe, and Dick Miller.

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A History of the Bureau of Land Management National Training Center



by

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*U. S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
National Training Center
Phoenix, Arizona - 1994*

BLM/AZ/GI-94/018+4530

1946

This account of the creation and growth of the Bureau of Land Management's National Training Center is the story of two predecessor organizations—the Lands and Minerals (L&M) School and the Phoenix Training Center (PTC). But it is also the story of the hard work and dedication of many BLM employees and of teamwork—of people from different resource activities, states, and offices in the Bureau seeing a need for change and working as a team to bring it about. Despite rapid change in the past decade, much of our story focuses on the National Training Center's roots in the L&M School, where BLM early recognized a strong need for training and where early decisions greatly influenced Bureau training.

Origins of the L&M School

Following the merger of the Grazing Service and the General Land Office in 1946, the field organization of the new Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was largely managed by veterans of the Grazing Service, whose concerns and knowledge were often limited to the Bureau's Range activities. For them, Lands positions, administering many of the functions of the old General Land Office, became a haven for Range people whose careers had become frustrated.



One might have thought that the Bureau's real estate or Lands people would find some training support in the real estate industry. But almost no knowledge was transferred between this industry and Lands or real estate activity inside government. Essentially no formal training existed for BLM realty specialists.

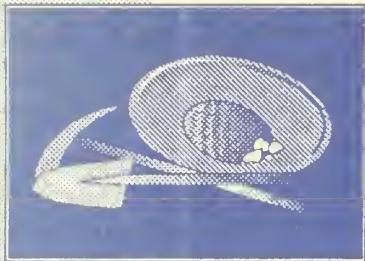
BLM's Minerals training slightly differed. For many years the main concern of field-based minerals specialists was mining claim validity work, which consisted of studying mining economics and technology to determine if a mining claim could support a paying mine. For this kind of decision, the nearest curriculum from academia was that of the mining engineer. As a result, mining engineers were scattered throughout BLM's field organization. But more often, since mining engineers were in short supply, BLM hired geologists, and the same general circumstance applied to both mining engineers and geologists. They both came from university departments or mining schools committed to private industry. In fact, such education was often heavily

1966

supplemented by mining industry funds, and graduates were indebted to the mining industry. But the curriculum rarely included courses on the Minerals work that graduates might do if they were ever employed by the government.

Few BLMers had stopped to analyze the training or educational backgrounds of BLM Lands and Minerals people. But one day in 1966, talking with a group of management trainees, Dale Andrus, Chief of the Division of Lands and Minerals Standards and Technology in the Director's Office, was confronted by Marlyn Jones, a management trainee from the field. Jones suggested a need for special training for Lands and Minerals people. A year and a half later,

Andrus, reassigned to the position of Chief of the Division of Lands and Minerals Standards and Technology at the Denver Service Center (DSC), remembered the challenge and hired Jones to work with him in analyzing needs and building a Lands and Minerals training program.



This two-man team realized that no such effort could be carried out by the two of them or even a larger lead group. To be successful, the effort had to be based on the teamwork of people in many staffs from all parts of the field organization. To establish a training organization in BLM would require the heavy involvement and support of resource management people. After all, resource management was BLM's main concern.

1968

A significant early event in the history of BLM's National Training Center was a meeting at the Denver Service Center in early 1968, a meeting convened to form what was to become the Lands and Minerals (L&M) School. The meeting was held in an old frame building—often described as a chicken coop—Building 22 at the Denver Federal Center. That building had little but a large conference room with 40 comfortable chairs.

The mainspring of the Denver meeting was Dale Andrus, assisted by an active staff that included Marlyn Jones, Frank Edwards, and Larry Montross. Representing the Personnel Office in Washington was one training officer, Guy Baier. Representing the Denver Service Center for Lands was Lou Bellesi and for Minerals was Lou Chichester. The hosts and training specialists were the proud occupants of this old conference room—Paul Rigrup, manager of the BLM Training Center in Denver, and his staff.

Perhaps the most intelligent decision of all had been made before the meeting. For the meeting brought together at least four district managers and representatives of the technical staffs of all BLM states and all major Bureau activities. Participants represented not just Lands and Minerals but also Range, Forestry, Wildlife, and several other technical activities.

That meeting resulted in a series of policy decisions that profoundly affected Bureau training:

1. The L&M School would be placed in a line organization—a district—not within or answerable to any Bureau staff but to the district manager.
2. The task of developing courses would be assigned wherever the expertise existed. For example, developing the Lands Status Records Course was assigned to the Montana State Office, the office of Ken Sire, a leading innovator on this subject. And the Land Classification Course was assigned to Arizona, which had an outstanding and expert instructor, Glen Collins.
3. Before a long-term beginning professional course would be offered, all on-board L&M specialists would be exposed to a 6-week-long intermediate course.
4. Adjudicator training would be launched soon but would be discussed at a later meeting.
5. All courses would be based on behavioral objectives—the behavior that would result from the training. This important decision was proposed by training specialists.

These decisions were discussed with the suitable Washington staff, and seldom did any problems arise. But the final adoption of this policy was left to the L&M School Training Coordinator. Remarkably, this policy was supported by the Washington staff, including such people as Irving Senzel, Mike Harvey, and Associate Director John Crow.

Several months of feverish activity followed the Denver meeting. Course developers would often sneak away singly or in groups to work in the old conference room in the chicken coop. The spark plug behind this activity was Marilyn Jones, spokesman for Dale Andrus.

During this period Andrus selected the Phoenix District as the site for the L&M School after a study team had examined candidate districts. One reason for this choice was that Arizona State Director Fred Weiler welcomed the chance to manage the program. In addition,

the Phoenix District had a large backlog of Lands cases that trainees could help reduce.

Since the Phoenix District Manager had no staff to help set up a training school, Marlyn Jones requested that Paul Rigrup be assigned to that District to help with selecting equipment, purchasing, and locating the school and a site for a future Phoenix District Office. The site eventually selected was at 2929 West Clarendon Avenue.

Two important selections were soon made. In November 1968, Tom Owen was transferred from the Director's Office to the Phoenix District as Training Coordinator with responsibility for supervising the L&M School. At the same time, Jane Owen (no relation) was selected to give

office and clerical support. Competent and energetic, both did outstanding work in launching the L&M School. Tom remained on the job until selected as Grand Junction District Manager in 1972. Jane stayed with PTC until she retired in 1984.

After the critical meeting in Denver, important decisions had to be made. Some course development responsibilities had already been delegated throughout the Bureau, and some instructors had been selected. By the time Tom Owen ended his tour at the L&M School, the Training Coordinator had final control over selecting instructors and updating course outlines.

Several months after the Denver meeting, a meeting at the Cliff Manor Resort Hotel on the north edge of Tucson considered the training needs of adjudicators. Adjudication had played a critical role in managing the Public Domain since 1812, when the General Land Office was established in the Treasury Department. This meeting determined that adjudicators could best be trained through several short courses, the most important of which would train beginning adjudicators together in both Lands and Minerals. (That course eventually lasted 5 weeks.) The meeting also decided that a shorter course should be held for experienced adjudicators to assure that their training needs were met before the beginners course was launched.



Tom Owen

1969

Early Years of the L&M School

The L&M School offered its first course in 1969. Because the Phoenix District Office was still sharing space with the Arizona State Office in the Federal Building, the L&M School was placed in several scattered rooms on the second floor of the downtown Phoenix post office. Lasting 6 weeks, the first few courses were held for experienced Lands and Minerals specialists throughout the Bureau. The first 2 or 3 weeks of training would be conducted jointly with Lands and Minerals people in the same classroom. Then during the last 2 weeks, specialized portions would be held in one classroom for Lands trainees and in another for Minerals trainees.

Tom Owen described the early training courses as follows:

I don't recall any big hitches in getting the first class under way. Some trainees were sent because they really needed training. Some were sent as a last-ditch effort to make something out of them. There was a reasonable mix of office and field work, but the days were often too long when a boring instructor had them all day. I tried to ensure enough breaks and would sometimes let them go a little early. By the end of 6 weeks they were sure anxious to go home.

Each person in the 6-week class was assigned the same problem. They were given three lands cases to work, and by the time they wrote their three reports, most of them were doing good work.

While the new facility was being built on West Clarendon, trainees attending classes at the post office stayed across the street at the Westward Ho Hotel, a few blocks up Central at the Coronet Ramada, at the old Adams Hotel, and at just about every other hotel or motel in downtown Phoenix.

When the District moved to West Clarendon, only one motel near the new building was suitable for trainees and instructors—the Rodeway Inn—about three to four blocks away on Grand Avenue. With



the beginning of 5-month training courses at the L&M School, abundant longer term housing, usually apartments, existed for trainees, who typically brought their spouses and families with them.

1970

In the 1970s decisions were often made and procedures adopted in the field under the provisions of new laws long before regulations could be drafted for the laws. People who first applied laws in the field were often asked to teach at the L&M School and were appointed to committees to draft regulations for the laws. This fact drew Washington staff members much more intimately into field activity than might have been so for normal times. It also created an environment of intensive cooperation and involvement of the Washington staff and field force. These procedures and attitudes easily provided models on which later activities were based when the L&M School and the Phoenix Training Center began incorporating Range, Wildlife, and other technical resource programs by the late 1970s.

The L&M School was fortunate during its early days in having two enthusiastic Phoenix District managers. The first of these, Jens Jensen, was also adept at involving all district key staff members in support of the school. Jensen was followed in the job by Riley Foreman, who had been around BLM in several roles and was also supportive and effective. During these early days something new happened all the time. Visiting instructors arrived from all parts of the Bureau. And new field exercises had to be mounted, requiring an endless round of booking hotel rooms and arranging equipment, buses, and vans.

As the Minerals sessions approached, Lou Chichester from the Denver Service Center would arrive in Phoenix to supervise what he had organized from his desk in Denver. Long-distance coordination was difficult and required special organizational skills. The problem was not resolved until early 1972, when the Phoenix Resource Area Manager Gordon Whitney, a graduate mining engineer, moved into the permanent and fulltime position of Minerals Coordinator.

1972

One of the L&M School's remarkable characteristics was its small staff. The school began with two people, Tom and Jane Owen, and operated that way for several months. When Gordon Whitney became Minerals Coordinator, he was the third staff member. Later when the program had been doubled to offer simultaneous year-round long and short courses, the staff was reduced once again to two and operated that way for several weeks.

The school's strength was the impressive list of visiting instructors—from government, industry, and universities throughout the West. Instructors included people in almost every kind of position in every BLM program, almost all judges on the Interior Board of Land

Appeals, several members of the Arizona State University law faculty, several people from state game and fish departments, and representatives of the mining and livestock industries.

Although these visiting instructors were often provided at no cost by the agencies they represented, more often they came at some expense to the school. Most of them received travel and expenses, and some were paid consulting fees. This expensive part of the school's operation was made possible because of the school's bureauwide support.

Another reason the small staff worked well was that from the beginning the school's training effort was spread widely throughout the Bureau. For example, attending the chicken coop meeting in Denver was Rolla "Spud" Chandler, Lands and Minerals Chief for Nevada. Chandler then returned to Nevada where he served as a course developer and organizer. He later taught at the school. In 1972, as Chief of the Lands Program in the Director's Office, Chandler brought his commitment to the L&M School and remained a committed supporter for the rest of his career.

From its early days, the L&M School was highly visible throughout the Bureau, especially when the school moved into the new District Office in 1972. Soon after the move, two 10-day seminars were held for the leading resource managers in Lands, Minerals, Range, Forestry, and other fields. The word rapidly spread bureauwide that the training in Phoenix was a "class act," an excellent program in a first-rate facility.

During those early days, the plan was to begin each year, in July or August, a 20-week program for both Lands and Minerals beginners. This program was to be the first Bureau duty station and experience for L&M people recruited directly from academia or the outside. These courses would end in early December. Then beginning in January, the facility would be used for a series of short courses, as many as time would allow, until late June, when it came time to recruit and begin training another beginners group.

By 1975 the L&M School found it needed two classes a year for beginning professionals, one starting in August and a second in January. As a result, the short courses began to overflow into hotel and motel conference rooms throughout Phoenix. Before long, a meeting in Washington determined that a pair of new conference rooms could be added at the West Clarendon office. The new rooms were never added, so the L&M School's small staff had to conduct a full load of training sessions

1975

at the District Office and another full load at conference rooms, occasionally at the Granada Royale Hotel at 24th Street and Thomas Road, several miles away.

The length of courses occasionally changed. Intermediate courses that began at the post office as 6-week classes were later shortened to 5 weeks. Before long, the 20-week beginning course for Lands was shortened to 16 weeks, and the beginning course for Minerals was extended to 22 weeks.

Because beginning professional employees reported to the L&M School as their first Bureau duty station, at about the 14th week of each class a placement panel informed trainees of their permanent duty stations. Looking like a slave auction, this event was always traumatic. After a few years, the school abandoned the practice, and trainees learned of their duty stations before training began.

Some interesting short courses were soon added to the L&M School's curriculum. The first and one of the most enduring was a class for area managers expected to supervise L&M activity. Within a 3-week period, area managers were introduced to some of the technology and lore of Lands and Minerals and learned things that might be expected of their L&M subordinates.

Since much of the Bureau's casework involved rights-of-way for electrical facilities and since electrical facilities have unique requirements, BLM combined forces with the Edison Electric Institute to offer an Electric Systems short course. BLM and the Institute have jointly conducted this course for many years.

After the first few courses for experienced adjudicators, a need was recognized for paralegal training. Adjudicators, who almost practiced law within their specialties, needed this training for dealing with lawyers who visited their land offices. As a result, a 3-week training course was developed to be taught by teaching teams of one judge from the Interior Board of Land Appeals and one law professor from Arizona State University Law School. This paralegal seminar was officially titled "intermediate" to replace the old intermediate course that had been discontinued. Bob Dinsmore of the Denver Service Center (DSC) helped conduct the paralegal courses for several years.

Several key people played significant roles in the L&M School. Foremost among these was Glen Collins. For years Chief of the Lands and

Minerals Programs at the Arizona State Office, Collins was involved with the L&M School from the earliest days and attended that first meeting at Building 22 in Denver. He became the leading instructor, in fact the only instructor, for realty specialists on field investigation and land classification procedures. He was an outstanding instructor, having a great deal of natural ability to command attention in the classroom. In addition to his role as instructor, Collins used his position as Arizona Chief of Lands and Minerals to provide critical support to the L&M School. He continued this support until he retired in 1984 to become the number two professional in the Arizona State Land Department.

By far the longest running act at the L&M School was performed by Ken Sire of Billings, Montana. In many courses Sire taught trainees how to read and interpret land office records. Because he taught so many courses over so many years, his impact was spread throughout BLM to several thousand trainees.

Sire was an effective instructor but was not easy. From the old hickory stick school of teaching, he used a great deal of drill and repetition, watching carefully the progress of everyone in the room. The accomplishment and learning in this course went far beyond the mere interpretation of lines and figures on pages. The course allowed people to ask in a nonthreatening environment, "What is a withdrawal?" "How does a withdrawal work?" "Do some withdrawals differ from others?" After all, how could they accurately interpret the contents of those master title plats and the supporting records without understanding the meaning of the legal and paralegal concepts underlying the legal status of lands? The content of this course therefore was not limited to the land records but was fundamental to understanding the business of managing lands and minerals.

While the L&M School was in the development and launching stages, Paul Rigtrup, still in the Division of Manpower and Organization, was invited to join a group in DSC's Standards and Technology Division to study the training needs of five other resource activities in the Bureau: Range, Wildlife, Forestry, Watershed, and Recreation. Range was rapidly developing an agenda for training beginning professionals. This action caught on in Wildlife, which was making rapid strides to catch up with Range.

The Training Center under Paul Rigtrup

*1972-
1984*

1973

By late summer of 1972, Tom Owen had been selected District Manager in Grand Junction, Colorado. As soon as that became general knowledge, Glen Collins from Arizona State Office called Paul Rigtrup at the Denver Service and said, "Tom Owen is leaving the L&M School. Do you want his job?" Rigtrup replied that he certainly was interested. Collins said, "Call Joe Fallini," the Arizona State Director. Rigtrup called Fallini to show his interest. But interest had a qualified meaning for Rigtrup, who thought he would discuss the future L&M School. Fallini simply said, "Call Ed Haste," the Arizona Associate State Director. So Rigtrup informed Haste that he was interested, again hoping for a chance to discuss the future before a decision would be made.

The following day Rigtrup departed for 2 weeks of Naval Reserve training at the Naval Training Laboratory outside San Diego, believing he could stay hidden for 2 weeks. But on Tuesday morning he received a call from Lou Bellesi, his supervisor at DSC. Bellesi said, "Call John Gregg," the Chief of Administration at the Arizona State Office. When asked why, Bellesi said "Gregg wants you to give him a reporting date." Rigtrup responded, "Am I going to Phoenix?" Bellesi answered, "I think you are. Ed Haste signed the action yesterday." So with no more discussion than this, Rigtrup was transferred to Phoenix to replace Tom Owen.

The summer class beginning in July 1973 was a subject of several pioneering decisions for the L&M School. Some Bureau people felt it was unfair to offer recruits from academia opportunities that were not being offered other BLM employees. Therefore the class reporting to the Lands Training Program in the summer of 1973 was recruited entirely from within BLM, with five trainees from the O&C Program in western Oregon. Trainees thereafter came mostly from assignments within the Bureau, but a preselection condition was announced in advance to trainees or candidates that after the training, 13 of the 15 trainees would be assigned to Alaska. The result was that, after selection, 15 trainees were all heavily committed to the idea of working in Alaska. Before the training program was well underway, the California and Alaska State Directors engaged in some horse trading,



Paul Rigtrup

1975

resulting in another graduate of the 1973 class being assigned not to Alaska but to Riverside, California. When the placement panel met to assign that class, the problem was not who should go where in Alaska, but how to locate and pacify the three who would be assigned outside Alaska.

Throughout its life, the L&M School played an important role in regard to Alaska, for Alaska trainees often made up large percentages of training classes of all kinds. Before being presented in Phoenix, an administrative law seminar was held in Anchorage to meet the urgent demand there for beginning adjudicators. At the time Alaska was engaged in a massive lands program arising from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Within a few years a beginning administrative law seminar was organized for a large class of Alaska trainees. The trainees remained in Alaska, and the program was taken to Anchorage.

Many times in the early days of the L&M School when the burdens were doubled or tripled without warning, the load fell heavily on Jane Owen. Owen excelled in logistics, particularly in the use of audiovisual equipment. She often had to set up conference rooms at several locations in the city on the same day. Aside from total loyalty, she was distinguished by her willingness to be there at odd times: weekends, early in the morning, late in the afternoon, whenever needed.

But Jane Owen had one thing working against her: she was perceived as the world's fastest and most accurate typist. Coordinators often found it all too tempting to hand her typing notes that she would type immediately and with total accuracy. Her hard work and loyal service were critical to the L&M School's birth and early development.

In 1975 when the L&M School obtained a fulltime position for a coordinator of the Lands programs, Dave Simpson was selected from Jens Jensens's staff in Anchorage. When Simpson came to the L&M School, he assumed responsibility for coordinating all the Lands-type programs and for maintaining the L&M School budget and tracking funding sources. Simpson's performance was outstanding, making possible so many other things that later took place. Like Jane Owen, Simpson was willing to work at any time the job required, and no amount of confusion or excitement could cause him to lose his calm.

Another important contributor from the early days was Harold Berends. Representing the New Mexico State Director, Berends attended the chicken coop meeting in Denver. In Santa Fe he was involved for

several years in the old Land Office operations and was an able spokesman for the interests of adjudicators. Berends also attended the Tucson meeting that organized adjudication training, where he contributed important ideas. Later when transferred to the Director's Office, he became budget representative for the Land's Program and presented the L&M School's funding requirements to the Budget Staff. In this role, he established several precedents that defined the role and the way many of his successors would perform it. He became a role model for people who followed him in that position in the Lands Staff and for similar positions in Minerals, Range, and Wildlife.

Berends' successor at the Director's Office was Kent Giles, who contributed greatly for a short time and was then succeeded by Frank Shields. Shields performed the budget function for several years but also became prominent as an instructor. He became involved with the school when BLM people were being introduced to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). For more than three years he taught FLPMA and other subjects before becoming Winnemucca District Manager. Shields retired in Phoenix and continues to have a high interest in BLM and the Training Center.

The massive change of the 1970s that affected the environment and the management of Lands and Minerals extended to almost every part of our society, including cultural diversity. An early significant decision affecting this diversity at the L&M School was made at the original chicken coop meeting, where another meeting was scheduled to plan training for adjudicators. Since probably more than 80 percent of adjudicators were women, this decision resulted in greatly increased training opportunities for BLM women. Also benefitting women was the decision to encourage fully qualified female adjudicators to teach classes. Before long, several female employees were training in the professional field categories at any one time.

Some of the fine women instructors were Marla Bohl of Cheyenne, Joan Russell of Sacramento, and Cindy Embretson of Billings. They were so good that they paved the way for other women instructors. By the time Range and Wildlife training began, women participants were accepted as routine.

While visiting in the Director's Office one day, Rigtrup was approached in the corridor by Eldon Hayes, then a staff specialist on the Director's Lands Staff. Hayes had a distinguished career that included several years as an adjudicator in the old Los Angeles Land

Office. As director of a Bureau Job Corps camp at Kingman, Arizona, he entered a town that still had racist billboards on its outskirts and in a short time had a positive effect on attitudes toward blacks.

Hayes suggested that the Bureau didn't do much to recruit or encourage black employees. And Rigrup agreed that it was especially strange because the Bureau's black employees, though few in number, were outstanding. After further discussion, Hayes and Rigrup decided to go to the Bureau Personnel Officer to suggest some action on this problem. After review, the Personnel Officer assigned the Division of Manpower and Organization at DSC the task of bringing more blacks into professional BLM careers.

More quietly on a local level, BLM districts began to recruit and hire more black employees. And before long those employees began to enter the training programs at the L&M School.

The situation was somewhat better for instructors. The Training Center has had several outstanding black instructors, including Claude Mayfield. For several years, the Denver Service Center presented an instructor seminar in which it encouraged instructors to invent new ways to involve trainees in their teaching. By far the outstanding practitioner of this process was Mayfield. Some of his exercises were so good that they were published in a book about participative methods. Mayfield and his colleague Marge Waggoner applied such methods to a course they developed on easement acquisition and eventually became star performers at the L&M School.

Mayfield was transferred to the L&M School, where he became coordinator of all adjudication courses and all other short courses not connected with existing resource management programs. He served with great effectiveness in that capacity until his retirement in 1985.

Through the 1970s and into the 1980s, BLM proved that opportunities were open to any person who could compete professionally. Trainees from many minority groups have participated in training programs, and several have been featured in prominent professional roles as L&M instructors. Opportunities for minorities continued as the L&M School developed into a full-fledged resource management training center.

1978

New Programs Are Added

When Rigtrup arrived at the L&M School in late 1972, he was determined to prove that he could build a resource management training

center given the right circumstances and opportunity. By July 1978, Range courses were being developed, and the L&M School was being moved out of the too-small district facility into three new conference rooms, under two roofs, along Indian School Road, where the L&M School was unofficially being called the Phoenix District Resource Management School.



Indian School Road

Dearl Wallace was selected from a lengthy list of qualified applicants as the first Range Coordinator, and he finished his long BLM career in 1981 in that position. He was followed in that position by Cliff Yardley in January 1982. Yardley brought to the job a variety of experience that allowed him to deal with people of all kinds. As an area manager, he confronted

all types of resource management problems in the field and recognized that Range was not the Bureau's only important program. He therefore found it easy and natural to cooperate with all resource programs at PTC, and his contribution was exactly what was needed. When PTC was reorganized in 1984, Yardley became Chief of the Division of Lands and Renewable Resources Training Development, a position he held until 1992.

1979

Not long after the move to Indian School Road, it became obvious that the Phoenix District Resource Management School was becoming larger than the Phoenix District itself. In October 1979 a decision was made with the participation and support of Arizona State Director Bob Buffington and Phoenix District Manager Bill Barker to separate the school from the Phoenix District and make it directly answerable to the Arizona State Director. At about the same time the school became known as the Phoenix Training Center (PTC).

Even before the first class convened for beginning Range specialists, word was out to the staff that supported Wildlife programs. Three-fourths of the wildlife specialists who had conducted the old study had

1980



5050 N. 19th Ave.

left the Bureau for the Fish and Wildlife Service. But a new link emerged: the Chief of Wildlife Programs in Washington was John Crawford, like Rigtrup a University of Idaho graduate. In this case, the link appeared to be important because it soon led to a December 1980 meeting in Reno to launch course development for a Wildlife training program. As before, the strategy was to involve all Bureau states and activities and attract course development and instructor support from all parts of the organization. A beginning Wildlife training course was presented a few months later.

While the school was moved into the conference rooms along Indian School Road, it was already apparent that better space was needed. Short courses were being held throughout Phoenix. At one time, a visit to all the school's classes required driving to five sites and a total distance of 19 miles. With this problem creating a terrible coordination load on the school, wheels were set in motion to relocate to 5050 North 19th Avenue. The facility officially opened on March 17, 1980.

Arizona State Directors have played extremely important roles in supporting the L&M School and PTC. State Director Fred Weiler was instrumental in attracting the school to Phoenix. Weiler was succeeded by Joe Fallini, a man who was enormously secure about himself and his career. Not even slightly jealous of his prerogatives or control, Fallini delegated control of the school to the Phoenix District Manager and the Lands and Minerals Coordinator but stood by to offer support when it was needed.

Fallini was succeeded by the Associate State Director from New Mexico, Bob Buffington. Buffington had been in the Director's Office and in New Mexico during the early days of the L&M School and was committed to and generously supported the school, encouraging instructors and trainees to participate. He continued this support as Arizona State Director.

Early during his tenure, Buffington chaired the first large group to conduct the task inventory that led to the creation of the Range Management training program.

Buffington's successor was Clair Whitlock, the Associate State Director in Alaska. Whitlock had previously served BLM in Arizona, Idaho, and

1982

Alaska, and had a great deal of experience in management processes. Interested, active, and well acquainted with many aspects of the Phoenix Training Center, Whitlock asked to participate in school projects and served as an instructor for several programs. He gave excellent and sensitive support, particularly as the school was enlarged with even more training programs.

Whitlock's successor, Dean Bibles, brought enthusiastic support for professional training, was instrumental in keeping field managers closely involved with Training Center support, and was often a speaker in classes. When in a position to fill the job of Center Manager, he found the ideal person in Larry Hamilton and gave Hamilton the freedom to build upon the existing foundations and bring to PTC the full scope of modern training techniques.

Bibles was succeeded by Les Rosenkrance. Rosenkrance has been completely supportive of the Training Center in the continued role of providing management oversight of PTC for the Bureau Management Team.

New Minerals Responsibilities

A major convulsion for PTC occurred in December 1982, when the Minerals Management Service, formerly the Conservation Division of the U.S. Geological Survey, merged with BLM, setting the Bureau off on a new course of training. In its early years the Conservation Division not surprisingly resembled the old Grazing Service, another of BLM's parents. When BLM was created, the Grazing Service and its predecessor, the Division of Grazing, had existed for only 11 years and never exceeded 200 employees. For many years the Conservation Division had fewer than 200 employees thinly spread in the field in an effort to stay on top of activities in the oil patch. Consisting mostly of two- or three-person offices at such places as Midwest, Wyoming; Taft and Coalinga, California; and Roswell, New Mexico, the Conservation Division did not have a large administrative hierarchy.

By the mid-1960s a major oil and gas lease sale in the Gulf of Mexico led to one bonus bid exceeding \$4 million and quickly drew attention to the Division and its functions. The sale even gained the attention of President Lyndon Johnson and led to a period of rapid increase in funds and staff. One reorganization followed another. As Christmas 1982 approached, a Conservation Division geologist wrote in a Christ-

*TC under
Larry
Hamilton*

*1984-
1991*



Larry Hamilton

mas card, "Since the first of January, I have been in five different organizations, and as the year ended, I was with the BLM."

At the time of the merger, the Minerals Management Service had a seven-position organization conducting training programs. Despite a high competence level of instruction, only two people from that training staff moved to Phoenix. During 1983, Rigtrup spent a good deal of time trying to understand what had been going on in this training, travelling to the oil patch in New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and southern California and participating in several training programs.

Leaving a rich legacy, Paul Rigtrup retired from BLM in 1984 after 12 years as Manager of the L&M School and PTC. By January 1, 1984, the staff had grown to 15 and was handling more than 40 courses and 800 trainees a year.

Rigtrup's successor Larry Hamilton reorganized PTC to provide more cost-effective training. A division was created to design and deliver decentralized training materials, including video programs, self-study packages, and program learning modules. Specialists in education, automated data processing, audiovisual communication, visual information, and writing and editing were hired, and new program areas and responsibilities were added:

Career Development; Soil, Water, and Air; Hazardous Materials Management; Biodiversity; and Riparian Management. The training developed at PTC began to evolve through training needs analyses methods and the expertise of education specialists.

As a result of the reorganization, PTC produced a variety of video programs for formal classroom training, self-study packages, and case studies. The goal was to decentralize the curriculum, to increase cost efficiencies, and to provide training at the teachable moment for the suitable target group. In

addition, PTC began offering interagency training courses to the Forest Service, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Indian tribes.

The Engdahl Years 1991- 1994

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The growth and development of PTC from 1984 to 1991 was based on the notion of quality services and products. The demand for PTC courses and products escalated to the point that another organizational study was conducted in 1990. The results of this study led to PTC's reorganization to reflect the structure of the Washington Office and to provide improved customer service. Also in 1990 PTC began working with the General Services Administration to design a new facility to better meet its needs.

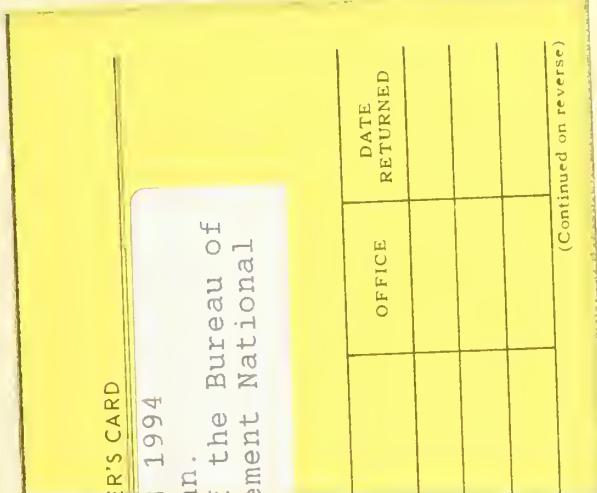
In 1991 Lynn Engdahl, Associate State Director for Arizona, replaced Hamilton as PTC Manager. Under Engdahl's leadership, PTC continued to grow and gain increased responsibilities. Many more courses were added as well as training programs in engineering, information resource management, records administration, geographic information systems, and cadastral surveying. In addition, the *Managers Course Guide*, BLM's catalog of courses, was automated, and Wayne State University in Detroit signed an agreement with PTC to offer undergraduate and graduate credits for PTC classes in hazardous materials management. During fiscal year 1993, PTC conducted 125 sessions of 76 standard classroom courses for 2,923 trainees, 469 of which were not BLM employees.

With the strong foundations laid by Rigrup and Hamilton, the Training Center was ready to formalize systems. Course development and course delivery were already excellent. Emphasizing needs assessment, prioritization, typical training paths, and validation, Engdahl has worked to complete the posture of a modern training center serving an agency with a proud and rich tradition.

The evolution of BLM's National Training Center from the chicken coop conference room in Denver and the old post office in downtown



Phoenix to its state-of-the-art facility at Metro Center reflects not only the Bureau's expanding responsibilities and changing mission, but the concern of Bureau people for providing the highest quality training and a willingness to do what is needed to ensure quality training. This history recognizes only a few of the contributors to National Training Center's success. But NTC is indebted to hundreds of other people for their hard work, dedication, and support over the years. The model on which NTC training has been based has ensured excellence in training and required the participation of the entire Bureau in the training effort. With a sound training model, a quarter century of experience, an ability to rapidly adapt to the latest technology, and widespread support throughout the Bureau, the National Training Center is better than ever prepared to face the challenges of the future.



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